

REMARKS

By this paper, new claims 37-39 have been added. Claims 1-7, 9, 15,16, 18-21, 24, and 35-39 are pending.

It is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom define patentable subject matter. Significantly, the cited art does not disclose a method involving an apparatus including structure permitting varying separation of first and second pivots in a manner enabling the separation to increase (See paragraph [0059] of the U.S. publication of the present application). It is also to be recognized that literal support for the recitation in claim 1 of the phrase “relatively full mobility” is set forth in paragraph [0019] of the U.S. publication of the present application.

New claims 37-39 have been added to recite further limitations which are also believed to define allowable subject matter. No new matter has been introduced in claims 37-39 as the subject matter recited in claim 37 (in-line) and claim 38 (non-sliding) are clearly illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2 and the subject matter recited in claim 39 (reduction of pressure) is set forth in paragraph [0060] of the U.S. publication of this application. It is submitted that the previously cited Walker (4,637,382) and Taylor (3,902,482) references do not, either alone or in combination, teach the subject matter recited in the newly presented claims. Notably, the extension 22 and pin 26 of Walker are not in line with plates 14 and 16. Additionally, it is notable that the pivot structure of Taylor is defined by two domes that slide one on top of the other. Moreover, the cited art does not contemplate pivot structure which carry a load so that the recited apparatus provides a reduction of pressure on a joint.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests that the application be reconsidered, the claims allowed and the application passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

STEPTOE & JOHNSON, LLP

/John V. Hanley/

John V. Hanley

Registration No. 38,171

JVH:kst
Steptoe & Johnson, LLP
2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 2800
Los Angeles, CA 90067
Telephone: (310) 734-3200
Facsimile: (310) 734-3300